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On Irish Emigration, with especial reference to the working of the Incumbered Estates Commission. By JOHN LOCKE, Esq.

[Read before the Statistical Section of the British Association, at Belfast, 3rd September, 1852.]

THE agricultural blight of 1846, which swept away the staple food of the Irish peasantry, initiated a series of events, that promise to result in a total revolution of the social and industrial condition of Ireland. Not only the love of country, but the rude agrarian links, that bound the peasant to his farmstead, at whatever desperate risk, were completely broken by the loss of the potato crop; and, following close upon the steps of famine, came that emigration, so unprecedented in extent, as to be termed by journalists *the National Exodus*; and which now appears to be annually increasing beyond the supply from births and emigration, the circle of attraction being widened by every emigrant, whose first savings are almost invariably transmitted to the parent country, for the purpose of defraying the passage-money of relatives and friends; the remittances from North America to Ireland, in 1851, intended mainly for this purpose, amounting to the enormous sum of 990,000*l*.*

According to the twelfth report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, the total decrease in the population between 1841 and 1851 was 1,659,330, and the emigration within the same period 1,289,133, or more than three-fourths of this decrease. Again, by the last census, the population of Ireland on March 31st 1850, was 6,515,794, and, assuming the rate of increase by births at 1 per cent. per annum, it would give an annual addition of only 65,157: but the number of emigrants in 1851 is estimated at 257,372, or about double the average emigration of the preceding ten years, whilst it exceeds any probable increase of the population by nearly four to one; and this disproportion is still further aggravated by the fact, that the outflow is of vigorous adults (male and female in nearly equal numbers), by whom population is mainly sustained, while orphaned infancy, destitution, and old age, an unprolific remnant, are left behind. The attraction of the gold-fields abroad, and the number of evictions at home, also contribute largely to swell the tide of emigration; and both these causes are on the increase, new gold districts being discovered, and proprietors of land, especially those who have purchased under the Incumbered Estates Court, finding the consolidation of farms a necessary preliminary to the introduction of an improved system of agriculture. This policy is, indeed, sometimes adopted with as little discretion as humanity, for tenancy must be considered in most instances as the indispensable instrumentality of production and profit, few purchasers being either willing to farm their land, or competent to so with advantage. There *may* be difficulty in finding a new tenant, but there *can* be no mistake in keeping and encouraging one who is inclined to improve.

If then Irish expatriation proceed in this accelerating ratio (and the number of emigrants for the first four months of 1852 (76,370)†

* Twelfth Report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, pp. 9—12, and p. 68.

† See Twelfth Report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, before referred to.

appears to warrant such an inference) a simple sum in arithmetical progression suffices to demonstrate, that the country will be denuded of its agricultural population in a very few years. There is no doubt, indeed, that the change is usually a beneficial one for the emigrants themselves, tending to develop, by many favourable opportunities, and urgent motives of action, their moral capabilities, and latent intellect; and rejecting the servile and slothful habits of a worn-out state of society for the awakening energies of a new country, that affords high remuneration for labour, and ensures to persevering industry its just measure of reward. And this observation applies especially to the inhabitants of the remote west, where the physical type has been gradually deteriorating for generations, and the inferior facial angle, and stunted size, denote degradation both of the physical and intellectual man. Where the peasantry had no knowledge of the wants of an advanced civilization, and no experience of its comforts, their food a precarious roof, their dwellings of mud and straw, the result could not be otherwise; for a sordid habitude of life will dwarf the bodily frame, and penury will "chill the genial current of the soul."

An elaborate article was lately published in a French newspaper (*La Presse*), by M. Bertillon, proving by comparison between the former condition of the negroes and present state of that emancipated race in the West Indies, that education and liberty conduce to lengthen life, and consequently increase population; and had we time now to enter upon the subject, we might demonstrate by comparison of Ulster with Connaught, that the numbers and prosperity of a population are precisely in proportion to the extension of sound education, and the application of the principles of industry and rational freedom to the conduct of life.

We now proceed to consider the reparative agencies, that promise to check the consequences of excessive emigration; and these are, 1st, The general progress of the people, industrial, educational, and social, 2ndly, A well defined law of tenure, worked out in the spirit of its intention by the mutual good-feeling and good-sense of landlords and tenants; and 3rdly, The improvement of the labouring classes, including cottiers and small farmers, whose profits and wages have been hitherto insufficient for decent maintenance. Now, the first-mentioned is abundantly manifest in the decrease of crime and the increase of agricultural improvement and general enterprise throughout the country. Of the second, we may entertain a well-grounded expectation, the matter being in competent and zealous hands; and the diminution of poor-law taxation, and substitution of independent capitalists for distressed or insolvent landed proprietors, who were unhappily incapacitated from fulfilling the responsibilities of their position, afford strong warranty for the improvement of the labouring classes; which is, indeed, already felt in the rise of wages and progress of industry in all its departments, agricultural, manufacturing, and commercial.

To discuss all the subjects involved in our inquiry, would lead to statements and reasonings quite too numerous and tedious for a brief essay: I have therefore selected but one branch, and have now the honour to lay before the section a series of tables, together with a few statistical observations, compiled from the records of the Encumbered Estates Court, proving the importance and extent of those social and

economic changes, which have been facilitated, rather than caused, by the enactment of a law, severe indeed in its operation to some, but justified by the public exigency, and rendered unavoidable from circumstances that legislative wisdom could neither anticipate nor control.

The number of Petitions lodged for sale of estates up to July 31st, is 2,389; number of Absolute Orders for sale, to same date, 1,714; the number of Conveyances executed to August 9th, is 2,310.

From the first sale under the act, which took place February 19th 1850, to the end of July 1852, not quite two years and a half, 779 estates, or parts of estates, have been sold, in 4,062 lots, to 2,455 purchasers; so that the number of proprietors has been more than trebled; and this proportion is in fact considerably greater; for the purchases of the Ballinahinch property, and a few other large estates, are intended for division and re-sale in lots.

The quantity of land, that has already changed hands, exceeds 1,000,000 acres, or one-twentieth of the surface of the island; the total area exclusive of water amounting, according to the Ordnance Survey, to 20,177,446 acres.

In comparing the great extent of acreage with the proportionally small amount of the purchase-money, especially in the case of English purchasers (see Table II), it must be borne in mind, that a great portion of the land, especially in Mayo and Galway, consists of mountain, bog, and unreclaimed tracts.

The total proceeds of the sales is upwards of 7,000,000*l.*, and the amount distributed up to August 26th, inclusive of about 1,000,000*l.* allowed to incumbrancers, who became purchasers, is 4,248,708*l.* 11*s.* 1*d.*, or nearly two-thirds of the produce of the sales; thus, not only realizing this enormous amount of capital, hitherto locked up in barren mortgages or chancery litigation, but quickening its circulation, and facilitating its productive reinvestment in the soil. The comparison of the number of purchasers with the number of conveyances executed, and of the amount distributed with the total amount of sales, prove how diligently and satisfactorily to the public the Commissioners are accomplishing their arduous labours.

TABLE I.

Showing the Number and Comparative Amounts of Purchasers under the Incumbered Estates' Court.

£1,000 and under.	£1,000 to £2,000.	£2,000 to £5,000.	£5,000 to £10,000.	£10,000 to £20,000.	£20,000 and upwards.	Total.
1,040	447	549	314	83	22	2,455

By this table it appears, that the purchasers at and under 2000*l.*, are two-thirds of the whole number; thus exhibiting the practical tendency of the Act to establish an independent agricultural middle class, which is so much wanting in Ireland. The greatest amount of sales has been in Galway,—nearly a million; the least in Londonderry,—only 7015*l.* There have been only two purchases exceeding 100,000*l.*, one in Galway, and one in Queen's County.*

* Emo Park, part of Lord Portarlington's estate, purchased by himself; and the Ballinahinch Estate in Galway, purchased by the mortgagees, the Law Life Insurance Company, who will probably re-sell in lots.

TABLE II.

Showing the County, Acreage, and Amount—English and Scotch Purchasers.

Number of Estates in which English and Scotch became Purchasers	Number of Purchasers.	County.	Acreage.			Purchase-Money.			Observations.
			A.	R.	P.	£	s.	d.	
		<i>Leinster.</i>							
5	5	Dublin				11,630	0	0	{ All for tenement-property in Dublin City.
2	2	Kildare	225	0	4	1,820	0	0	
3	3	Kilkenny	2,925	0	36	41,225	0	0	
1	1	King's County..	726	2	18	825	0	0	
2	2	Longford	2,866	1	19	7,360	0	0	
2	2	Louth	4,504	3	31	23,350	0	0	
2	2	Meath	1,004	0	8	13,150	0	0	
2	3	Westmeath	1,965	0	10	27,000	0	0	
2	2	Queen's County	599	1	21	3,000	0	0	
1	1	Wexford	9,887	1	24	55,200	0	0	
2	2	Wicklow	6,308	0	23	37,825	0	0	
			31,012	0	34	222,385	0	0	
		<i>Munster.</i>							
10	11	Cork	10,223	2	2	86,569	12	6	{ This sum includes 15,168 <i>l.</i> 12 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i> for tenement-property purchased by the Board of Inland Revenue in Cork City.
3	3	Kerry	5,384	2	12	10,250	0	0	
6	8	Limerick	19,267	2	8	88,770	0	0	
15	19	Tipperary	16,070	1	23	140,845	0	0	
4	6	Waterford	3,396	0	4	35,965	0	0	
			54,342	0	9	362,399	12	6	
		<i>Ulster.</i>							
1	1	Antrim	750	0	0	23,750	0	0	{ 2,500 <i>l.</i> of this amount for mines. 330 <i>l.</i> of this amount for tithe rent-charge. 2,120 <i>l.</i> of this amount for tithe rent-charge.
3	2	Cavan	4,341	0	1	24,635	0	0	
1	1	Donegal	365	1	34	2,400	0	0	
1	1	Monaghan	77	0	31	117	0	0	
2	2	Tyrone	1,851	1	16	5,020	0	0	
			7,385	0	2	55,922	0	0	
		<i>Connaught.</i>							
12	15	Galway	227,010	1	12	331,050	0	0	
3	3	Leitrim	3,302	1	37	14,850	0	0	
3	3	Roscommon ..	1,464	2	34	9,030	0	0	
7	14	Mayo	78,549	0	6	104,490	0	0	
95	114	25 Counties out of 32	310,236	2	9	459,420	0	0	

English and Scotch have purchased in every county in Ireland, except Clare in Munster, Sligo in Connaught, and Down, Armagh, Cavan, Fermanagh, and Londonderry, in Ulster.

TABLE III.
Acreage and Amounts arranged according to Provinces.

Provinces.	Acreage.			Purchase-Money.		
	A.	R.	P.	£	s.	d.
Leinster	31,012	0	34	222,385	0	0
Munster	54,342	0	9	362,399	12	6
Ulster	7,385	0	2	55,922	0	0
Connaught	310,326	2	9	455,420	0	0
Total	403,065	3	14	1,100,126	12	6

TABLE IV.
Showing the Localities from whence the Purchase-Money came.

Number of Purchasers.		Purchase-Money.			Number of Purchasers.		Purchase-Money.		
		£	s.	d.			£	s.	d.
58 from London and its vicinity....		720,641	19	2	Brt. Forward		925,533	12	6
11	„ Lancashire*	56,526	13	4	1	from Oxfordshire	6,280	0	0
1	„ Buckinghamshire	1,220	0	0	1	„ Pembrokeshire	3,820	0	0
	„ shire				1	„ Suffolk	5,730	0	0
4	„ Cheshire	53,205	0	0	1	„ Shropshire	7,690	0	0
1	„ Derbyshire	2,525	0	0	1	„ Sussex	7,610	0	0
5	„ Devonshire	14,445	0	0	3	„ Staffordshire....	57,450	0	0
1	„ Durham	7,750	0	0	1	„ Somersetshire..	2,550	0	0
1	„ Gloucestershire	11,830	0	0	1	„ Warwickshire..	5,750	0	0
2	„ Hampshire	24,400	0	0	2	„ Yorkshire	3,517	0	0
1	„ Hertfordshire..	11,000	0	0	8	„ Scotland	46,220	0	0
3	„ Lincolnshire....	5,490	0	0	1	„ Calcutta	24,250	0	0
1	„ Norfolk.....	16,500	0	0	3	„ Isle of Man	1,406	0	0
					1	„ America	2,320	0	0
Carried forward		925,533	12	6	114		1,100,126	12	6

* Including 39,276*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* from Liverpool and Birkenhead.

TABLE V.
Showing the Number and Comparative Amounts of English and Scotch Purchasers.

£1,000 and under.	£1,000 to £2,000.	£2,000 to £5,000.	£5,000 to £10,000.	£10,000 to £20,000.	£20,000 and upwards.	Total.
24	18	26	21	13	12	114

Of these, one purchaser was from Calcutta, amount 24,250*l.*; three from the Isle of Man, all under 1,200*l.*; and eight from Scotland:—viz., one between 2000*l.* and 5000*l.*; and seven between 5900*l.* and 10,000*l.* Of the eight purchasers from Scotland, two were gentry and six farmers.

TABLE VI.

Showing (as accurately as can be ascertained) the Classification of these Purchasers.

Gentry, including eight Titled Persons.	Manufacturers and Merchants, including eight Firms.	Insurance and Land Companies.	Farmers.	Total.
52	36	6	20	114

It is a fact of great importance, as affecting the improvement of the far west, that English and Scotch purchasers, and farmers also, usually settle in groups. Thus, 63,000 acres of Sir R. O'Donnell's Mayo estates have been purchased by English capitalists, led by Mr. Ashworth; whose work, entitled "The Saxon in Ireland," has been so serviceable to this country. And now a large portion of Erris, and of the northern shores of Clew bay, are in the possession of Englishmen. Again, in Galway another set of English purchasers, Messrs. Twining, Ellis, Eastwood, Palmer, and others, are grouped on the shores of Ballinakill bay, and in the vale of Kylemore. Nor are our own countrymen backward in the work of improvement, nineteenth-twentieths of the purchasers being Irish, and the greater number of these, especially in the west, diligently applying their capital to reclamation of the soil. Even in this prosperous province, the advantages of facilitating the sale and transmission of hopelessly incumbered property, are remarkably exemplified, the sale of the Mountcashel estate affording opportunity to the wealthy citizens of Belfast to invest their capital in land; and the sale of the Donegal estate stimulating the enterprise of manufacturers and tradesmen, by enabling them to purchase their own holdings or tenements in the borough.

We now return to our subject of English and Scotch purchases; and it will be observed, on reference to the foregoing tables, that by far the greater proportion of these is in the very districts of the far west, where the population has been most diminished, and where capital and improvement are chiefly required; three-fourths of the total average being in Galway and Mayo, and two-fifths of the total amount being invested in the same counties.

The immigration too is confessedly not of an expulsive character, abundance of unoccupied land, perished from stagnant water, or the surface of which has been only scratched in scattered patches for centuries, being in the market, and inviting the advent of more productive systems of culture.

The number of English and Scotch purchasers, as well as the amount of their investments, is also increasing. Up to January 31st

of this year, the purchasers were one-twenty-fifth* as to number, and one-tenth as to the total amount of purchase-money. On referring to these tables, we shall find, that up to July 31st the proportion as to number is one-twentieth, and as to amount, about one sixth of the total purchase-money.

It is undeniable, that the forethought, punctuality, disciplined labour, and scientific skill of the English and Scotch farmer,—what may in one word be termed industrial economy, must prove an invigorating graft on those wayward and procrastinating habits, that have for so long a period impeded the improvement of the peasantry of the south and west of Ireland.

It was not until the jealousies of Norman and Saxon merged in one common name and undivided interest, that the signs were developed in England of that progress, which has placed her at the head of the nations. And just in proportion as the invidious distinction of Celt and Saxon is forgotten in this country, and all classes, however differing in creed or opinion, are bound to each other and to the throne by the links of constitutional loyalty and social order, will a similar happy example of progress be developed in Ireland.

Additional Observations on the Valuation and Purchase of Land in Ireland. By the same Author.

[Read before the Statistical Society of London, 15th November, 1852.]

IN the present transition state of property in Ireland, valuation of land, based upon correct data, is of great importance; and the writer of this paper respectfully offers the results of his information and experience on the subject, in the hope that these may be of service, especially to English and Scotch capitalists seeking investments in this country.

The Commissioners for the Sale of Incumbered Estates, in certain cases, direct a special valuation to be made by some competent valuator, on application made to them showing proper reasons for such a measure; but it is required, in every case, that the Poor Law and Government valuations should be set forth in the published rentals of estates for sale in their court. The Poor Law valuation may be comparatively useful, as a check on other valuations, in estimating the amount of purchase; but, having been originally made, or subsequently revised, by isolated individuals at different periods, without co-operation or reference to any fixed schedule of prices, it cannot be relied on as an accurate measure of value. The Government valuations were constituted under three Acts of Parliament, made respectively in 1839 (6 and 7 Wm. IV. c. 84), 1846 (9 and 10 Vict. c. 110), and 1852 (15 and 16 Vict. c. 63). The first-named, usually termed the Ordnance Valuation, was based on a fixed scale of prices of agricultural produce, and intended to form an uniform and relative valuation, the townland (the smallest denomination of land possessing permanent boundaries) being made the unit

* See a pamphlet published by Hodges and Smith, Dublin; Simpkin and Marshall, London; entitled "Ireland. Observations on the People, the Land, and the Law in 1851," (pp. 66—68,) which contains a great quantity of well-arranged and authentic information relative to the condition and prospects of Ireland.